

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated March 7, 2003. Claims 1-4, 7-11, 14-19 and 22-27 have been amended and new Claim 29 has been added. The specification has been amended. No new matter has been added by any of the amendments made herein.

A check in the amount of \$18.00 is enclosed to cover the cost of the new claim. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for any insufficiency or to credit any overpayment.

The specification has been amended to associate generic terminology with some of the trademarks described on page 4 of the specification in response to the Examiner's request. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-5, 8 to 12, 14 and 22 to 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,697,843 to Manship et al. ("Manship"). Claims 6, 13, 21 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Manship* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,569,084 to Nicastro et al. ("Nicastro"). Additionally, Claims 7, 15 to 20 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Manship*. Applicant disagrees with these rejections. Nevertheless, the claims have been amended to more clearly define the present invention over these references and are limited only to that extent. Additionally, minor changes have been made to clarify the claim language and not for the purpose of distinguishing over these references.

Regarding the rejection under §102, amended Claim 1 is directed to a gaming device having a primary game including a plurality of independently operable identical sets of reels. Each set of reels has a plurality of reels and a plurality of identical sets of symbols on each of the sets of reels. A plurality of paylines are associated with the sets of reels where each of the paylines is associated with one of the sets of reels and each set of reels has at least one of the paylines associated with the set of reels. The display device is adapted to simultaneously display the identical sets of reels. Additionally, the gaming device includes a processor which communicates with the display device, enables a player to wager on the paylines associated with the plurality of sets of reels, evaluates each of the sets of reels wagered on by the player for winning

combinations of the symbols on any of the paylines and provide payouts to the player based on the combinations of symbols and the player's wager. *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest the combination of elements of amended Claim 1.

Manship discloses a video gaming machine including a display screen which displays one set of three simulated slot machine reels on a screen where the reels are each divided into an array of cells (see Col. 1, lines 26 to 34). Specifically, the display screen is divided into a 3 x 3 array of cells 32 where each cell displays an individual game element or symbol selected randomly from a group of available game elements in a game (see Col. 4, lines 45 to 55). A plurality of payout lines 36 are associated with the rows, columns and diagonals of the array of cells and indicate a predetermined sets of cells which are examined to detect winning combinations of game elements on the three simulated reels in the game (See the Abstract and Col. 4, line 45 to Col. 5, line 15). In addition, the video gaming machine includes different payout tables associated with different winning combinations of symbols indicated in predetermined cells associated with the array of cells. (See column 5, line 27 to column 6, line 34).

In the Office Action, the Patent Office asserts that *Manship* discloses "a primary game comprising a plurality of identical . . . reels with each set of reels having a plurality of reels" as in the claimed invention, and specifically refers to Column 4, lines 48-52 of *Manship* as disclosing this element. *Manship*, however, does not disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of independently operated sets of reels or a plurality of independently operated identical sets of reels, wherein at least one payline is associated with each set. As shown in Fig. 2 of *Manship* and as described above, *Manship* discloses a 3 X 3 array 30 of cells 32, which indicate the game elements displayed on three simulated spinning reels of a slot machine. In particular, each cell 32 displays one game element selected randomly from an associated look-up table 34 stored in the processor of the gaming machine (Col. 4, lines 45-53). *Manship* discloses that each of the look-up tables 34 are *identical* (Col. 4, lines 45 to 55). However, *Manship* does not disclose or suggest several sets of reels each set including a plurality of reels, wherein the sets are independently operated and identical.

Additionally, *Manship* does not disclose "a plurality of paylines associated with said sets of reels, wherein each said paylines is associated with one of said sets of

reels and each set of reels has at least one of said paylines associated with said set of reels" as in the claimed invention. Instead, *Manship* discloses payout lines 36 which extend across the array 30 of cells and constitute rows, columns and diagonals associated with the array (Col. 5, lines 1-6 and Fig. 5). The payout lines 36 are therefore associated with all of the cells the single set of simulated video reels and not associated with reels in a plurality of identical sets of reels. For the above reasons, *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the elements of amended Claim 1. Therefore, amended Claim 1 and Claims 2 to 7, as amended, which depend from amended Claim 1, are each patentably distinguished over *Manship* and are in condition for allowance.

Amended Claim 8 discloses similar elements to amended Claim 1 and specifically includes the elements of "a plurality of sets of reels" and "a plurality of paylines associated with said sets of reels" where "each said payline is associated with one of said sets of reels and each set of reels has at least one of said paylines associated with said set of reels." As stated above, *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of sets of reels and specifically a plurality of identical sets of reels. For the reasons provided above, amended Claim 8 and Claims 9 to 14, which depend from amended Claim 8, are each patentably distinguished over *Manship* and are in condition for allowance.

Amended Claim 22 also includes similar elements to amended Claim 1. Specifically, amended Claim 22 includes "a plurality of sets of reels, each set of reels having a plurality of reels" and "a plurality of paylines associated with said sets of reels" where "each said payline is associated with one of said sets of reels and each set of reels has at least one of said paylines associated with said set of reels." For the reasons provided above, amended Claim 22 and Claims 23 to 28, which depend from amended Claim 22, are each patentably distinguished over *Manship* and are in condition for allowance.

Claim 6 was rejected under §103(a). Claim 6 depends from amended Claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 6 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 1 because the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro* does not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 6 in

combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 1. For these reasons, Claim 6 is patentably distinguished over the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro*.

Claims 13 was rejected under §103(a). Claim 13 depends from amended Claim 8. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 13 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 8 because the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro* does not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 13 in combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 8. For these reasons, Claim 13 is patentably distinguished over the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro*.

Claim 21 depends from amended Claim 15. Amended Claim 15 includes similar elements to amended Claim 1. Specifically, Claim 15 is directed to a gaming device having a plurality of sets of reels, each set of reels having a plurality of reels, a plurality of symbols which are identical on each of the sets of reels, a plurality of paylines associated with each of the sets of reels, where a plurality of paylines associated with said sets of reels, where each of the paylines is associated with one of the sets of reels and each set of reels has at least one of the paylines associated with the set of reels, and a display device adapted to simultaneously display the sets of reels. The gaming device also includes a processor which controls the display device, evaluates a wager made by a player, places the wager on one of the paylines associated with a first set of the sets of reels and places a subsequent wager on one of the paylines associated with a second of the sets of reels if all of the paylines associated with the first set of reels are wagered on by the player.

As described above, *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest such elements. Moreover, *Nicastro* discloses a method of implementing desired odds for a reel-type slot machine but does not disclose or suggest a slot machine having more than one set of reels. Therefore, the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro* does not disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention. For these reasons, Claim 21 is patentably distinguished over the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro* and in condition for allowance.

Claim 28 was rejected under §103(a). Claim 28 depends from amended Claim 22. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 28 is allowable for at

least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 22 because *Manship* and *Nicastro* do not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 28 in combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 22. For these reasons, Claim 28 is patentably distinguished over the combination of *Manship* and *Nicastro* and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 7, 15 to 20 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Manship*. Claim 7 depends from amended Claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 7 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 1 because *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 7 in combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 1.

Amended Claim 15 is patentably distinguished over *Manship* for the reasons provided above. Therefore, amended Claim 15 and Claims 16 to 20, which depend from amended Claim 15, are each patentably distinguished over *Manship*.

Claim 27 depends from amended Claim 22. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 27 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 22 because *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 27 in combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 22. For these reasons, Claim 27 is patentably distinguished over *Manship*. For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7, 15 to 20 and 27 are in condition for allowance.

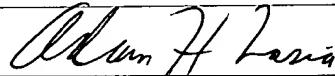
Newly added Claim 29 depends from amended Claim 22. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 29 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended Claim 22 because *Manship* does not disclose, teach or suggest the novel element of Claim 29 in combination with the novel elements of amended Claim 22. For these reasons, Claim 29 is patentably distinguished over *Manship* and is in condition for allowance.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the Applicants attorney, Adam Masia, at (312) 807-4284 to discuss this Response.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

By



Adam H. Masia
Reg. No. 35,602
P. O. Box 1135
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1135
Phone: (312) 807-4284

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